

Message Text

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PAGE 01 JAKART 13190 291121Z

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

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FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0954

INFO DIA WASHDC

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

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AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

AMCONSUL MEDAN

AMCONSUL SURABAYA

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SUBJ: PORTUGUESE TIMOR (PT) DEVELOPMENTS

REF: JAKARTA 12795 (200901Z OCT 75)

BEGIN SUMMARY: PRESS REPORTS CONTINUING ADVANCE OF PRO-
INDONESIAN FORCES TOWARD DILI, CAPTURING TOWN OF BOBONARO
AND FOCING WITHDRAWAL OF FRETILIN UNITS. FONMIN MALIK
DEPARTS SHORTLY FOR NOV 1 TALKS WITH PORTUGUESE IN ROME,
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PAGE 02 JAKART 13190 291121Z

WHILE FRETILIN APPEALS TO LISBON FOR IMMEDIATE NEGOTIATIONS

ON INDEPENDENCE. AUSTRALIAN AMBASSADOR WELCOMES GOI-PORTUGUESE TALKS AND SAYS AUSTRALIA WOULD SUPPORT INTEGRATION OF PT INTO INDONESIA IF LOCAL POPULATION DESIRES IT. IN PUBLIC STATEMENTS DPR CHAIRMAN CALLS FOR A RAPID SETTLEMENT OF PT ISSUE AND INFORMS DOUBTS DECOLONIZATION CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED IN ORDERLY MANNER. END SUMMARY.

1. BATTLEFIELD. APODETI/ACM FORCES REPORTED THE CAPTURE OF BOBONARO OCT 22 AFTER OVERCOMING SIGNIFICANT RESISTANCE AND KILLING 100 FRETILIN DEFENDERS. (BOBONARO IS 15 KM EAST OF MALIANA AND 60 KM FROM DILI.) MAIN COLUMN APODETI/ACM FORCES NOW REPORTED APPROACHING CAILACAO ON THE WAY TO ATABAI. ONE REPORT SAYS APODETI/ACM UNITS ALSO NEARING COASTAL TOWN OF MAUBARA ONLY 25 KM FROM DILI. (MAP OF MILITARY SITUATION DRAWN BY SINGAPORE STRAITS TIMES AND PUBLISHED OCT 28 IN SINAR HARAPAN SHOWS APODETI/ACM TROOPS ALREADY FAR BEYOND ATABAI.) FRETILIN LEADER OLIVEIRA LOBATO ADMITTED WITHDRAWAL OF FIVE COMPANIES OF WEEL-ARMED FRETILIN TROOPS FROM MALIANA-BOBONARO SECTOR BUT CLAIMED THIS DUE TO DANGER OF FLOODS. JAKARTA PRESS AGAIN REPORTS FRETILIN USING WOMEN AND CHILDREN AS SHIELDS FOR TROOPS, AND ADDS THAT FRETILIN NOW USING SCORCHED EARTH TACTICS IN TOWNS BETWEEN MOUNTAINOUS AREAS AND DILI.

2. NEGOTIATIONS. GOI FONMIN MALIK IS SCHEDULED TO DEPART OCT 30 OR 31 FOR NEGOTIATIONS NOV 1 WITH PORTUGUESE IN WESTERN EUROPE (ROME SITE NOT YET ANNOUNCED PUBLICLY). MALIK TOLD NEWSMEN INDONESIA DID NOT MIND IF DECOLONIZATION OF PT DID NOT TAKE PLACE UNTIL 1978 BUT THE PRESENT SITUATION COULD NOT BE TOLERATED. HE RE-ITERATED THAT GOI PREPARED TO HELP RESTORE SECURITY AND ORDER IN PT, AND DESCRIBED AS "PANICKY AND FRANTIC" FRETILIN'S DESIRE FOR TALKS WITH INDONESIA, PORTUGAL, AND OTHER TWO FACTIONS IN PT. MEANWHILE, FRETILIN HAS ASKED PORTUGAL TO IMMEDIATELY SET A DATE FOR NEGOTIATIONS ON PT INDEPENDENCE, HOPEFULLY TO TAKE PLACE IN FIRST TWO WEEKS OF NOVEMBER. FRETILIN REPORTEDLY INVITED OBSERVERS TO WITNESS THAT PT IS PEACEFUL AND ORDERLY AND UNDER THE POLITICAL AND MILITARY CONTROL OF FRETILIN.

3. RELATIONS WITH AUSTRALIA. SPEAKING IN BANDUNG OCT 26, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AUSTRALIAN AMBASSADOR WOLCOTT SAID HE WELCOMED TALKS BETWEEN INDONESIA AND PORTUGAL TO SOLVE PROBLEMS OF PORTUGUESE TIMOR. HE DENIED ACCUSATIONS THAT GOA HAD SIDED WITH FRETILIN AND ENCOURAGED ITS ACTIONS, AND SAID AUSTRALIA WOULD SUPPORT INTEGRATION OF PT INTO INDONESIA IF THAT WERE THE CHOICE OF ITS PEOPLE. THE INDONESIAN SHIP "GUNUNG TAMBORA" WAS DELAYED FOUR DAYS IN MELBOURNE BY A BOYCOTT OF DOCK WORKERS PROTESTING INDONESIA'S TIMOR POLICY, BUT BOYCOTT WAS ENDED

OCT 27 FOLLOWING AN APPEAL TO THE LABOR UNION BY FONMIN MALIK NOT TO LET FRETILIN PROPAGANDA DISRUPT THE CLOSE RELATIONS BETWEEN AUSTRALIA AND INDONESIA. BODIES OF FOUR WHITES FOUND AT BALIBO OCT 20 AND PRESUMED TO BE THOSE OF MISSING AUSTRALINA REPORTERS STILL HAVE NOT BEEN POSITIVELY IDENTIFIED.

4. STATMENTS BY GOI OFFICIALS. DPR CHAIRMAN IDHAM CHALID AT OPENING OF HOUSE SESSION OCT 20 CALLED FOR SWIFT SETTLEMENT OF PT ISSUE IN VIEW OF BURDEN IMPOSED ON INDONESIA IN CARING FOR TENS OF THOUSANDS OF REFUGEES (OVER 36,000) FROM THE COLONY. INFORMATION MINISTER MASHURI EXPRESSED DOUBT OCT 21 THAT PROCESS OF DECOLONIZATION IN PT COULD BE IMPLEMENTED IN AN ORDERLY MANNER AND REGRETTE THE PREVALENCE OF TERRORIST PRACTICES. DEFENSE MINISTER GENERAL PANGGABEAN TOLD AN ABRI LEADERSHIP MEETING OCT 22 THAT THE GOI HAD NO TERRITORIAL AMBITIONS BUT WELCOMED THE DESIRE OF GROUPS IN PT FOR INTEGRATION WITH INDONESIA. NEWSOM

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